

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

Claims 1-25 (Canceled)

CLAIMS

26. (New) A mask for the protection against biological agents consisting in a plurality of layers, characterized in that at least one of them, having filtering functions, is composed of borosilicate micro-glass fibers bound together by a vinyl acetate resin, the fiber matrix being supported by a strong, cellulose based, substrate and the structure being treated with a silicone based coating to impart hydrophobic properties.

27. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 26, the plurality of layers comprising:

- a central layer, having filtering function, composed of the borosilicate micro-glass fibers bound together by a vinyl acetate resin, the fiber matrix being supported by a strong, cellulose based, substrate and the structure being treated with a silicone based coating to impart hydrophobic properties,
- an inner layer having shape-retaining function, and
- an outer layer having covering function

28. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 27, wherein the filter layer has thickness ranging between 150 and 400 microns and unit area ranging between 25 and 65 g/m².

29. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 27, wherein the inner layer, with the function of retaining shape and providing structure to the mask body as well as providing support for the filtration layer, is made from non-woven fabric obtained by polypropylene or polyester fibers

30. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 27, wherein the inner layer is made from non-woven fabric consisting in polypropylene fibers

31. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 27, wherein the outer layer, having covering function to protect the filtration layer from abrasion, is made from non-woven fabric obtained by polyolefins, polyester or nylon fibers

32. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 27, wherein the outer layer is made from meltblown polypropylene fibers

33. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 26, equipped with a valve to facilitate the breathing which opens, in response to increased pressure, when the wearer exhales, allowing air to be rapidly evacuated from the mask interior, and which closes during inhaling

34. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 33, wherein the valve comprises a valve seat (a) over which is secured a raised valve cover (b), carrying apertures (c).

35. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 34, wherein the relief (f) of the valve seat owns a concave surface wherein a continuous, cylinder shaped, plastic (i) lays all along the surface of the relief.

36. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 35, wherein the relief of the valve seat is circular, the valve flap is round shaped and

the continuos, cylinder shaped, plastic is an O-ring which lays allover the circumference of the relief.

37. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 26, wherein the mask is equipped, on the edges, with a boundary sealing layer to improve the seal; the boundary layer is applied all along the perimeter of the mask, starting from the side joins; the seal layer tightly fits over the wearer's face adapting to any face shape; that ensures a leak free contact to the wearer's face, without pin holes and distorsions which would allow contaminants to pass through the mask body without being removed by the filtering material.

38. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 37, wherein the material of the boundary sealing layer is made from a natural rubber latex resin or a silicone based resin

39. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 37, wherein the boundary sealing layer is made from natural rubber latex applied in some 2 mm thickness and in unit area ranging between 200 and 400 g/m²

40. (New) A mask as claimed in claim 26, wherein adjoining a boundary sealing layer, a strip, made from the same material than the boundary sealing layer, is applied in the nose clip area; the strip makes the mask more comfortable to wear and, further on, improves the seal between the mask and the face at the nose portion wherein deformations and plies may normally be present